



Flathead City-County Board of Health

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Reproductive Health Services

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Home Health Services

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WIC Services

751-8170 FAX 751-8171

Policy 2006-02 Mobile – Immobile Coffee Vendors

Background

Flathead County has many coffee vendors that operate in small facilities. Some of these facilities are applying to operate as a mobile food service facility and some are applying as a permanent facility. If the vendors are applying as a permanent facility they are proposing to be served by water under pressure and sewer. If the vendors apply as a mobile facility, they are to operate from a commissary and utilize holding tanks to store their potable water supply and hold their wastewater for disposal at a sanitary wastewater station on a daily basis. The Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM 37.110.256) specify how mobiles are to operate.

The Department encourages all coffee vendors to operate a permanent facility served by piped hot and cold water under pressure and be connected to a sanitary sewer. Many vendors elect to operate as a mobile facility to minimize to costs associated with establishing an operation. Mobile units are to report to their commissary on a daily basis to replenish supplies, properly clean utensils, replenish their potable water supply and properly dispose of their wastewater. With some reluctance, the Department approves their operation and issues a food purveyor license. Generally and within a short period of time, the mobile vendors stop being mobile. These immobile-mobile facilities then commence to haul in their potable water supply and dispose of wastewater in a fashion that may not be approvable. The Board adopted a Mobile Food Service Establishment Policy in 1994. This policy was created to address this matter as it limits the food that can be purveyed from these immobile-mobile facilities. Generally, there is a direct relationship to menu complexity and hand washing and ware washing required to operate in a safe manner; that is, more water is required for complex menus. The policy attempts to limit the menus from this type of operation and minimize the risk associated with food service establishments operating out of compliance with the food service regulations.


Objective

It is the intent of this policy to require coffee vending operations to operate with piped hot and cold water under pressure and be connected to a sanitary sewer. The only exemption would be those operations that perfectly fit the mobile food service requirement found in the regulation (ARM 37.110.256). Compliance with this policy will be required for all new coffee vendors that apply after the date of Board of Health approval. Policy Number 94-1 will remain in effect as some coffee vendors continue to operate under this policy. Operators may continue to operate under this policy until such a time when they increase the complexity of their menu. At the time when the menu has changed and is considered more complex, Policy 2006-02 will be imposed.

Policy

All newly proposed coffee vendors will operate with piped hot and cold water under pressure and be connected to a sanitary sewer. Any existing coffee vendor may continue to operate under policy number 94-1 and in compliance with ARM 37.110.256 until such a time that the complexity of their menu increases over what was approved through the Department during plan review. If a plan review does not exist, coffee vendors will be required to comply with this policy if they exceed the menu limitations established in Policy Number 94-1 and commenced operation after April 15th, 1994. If an existing vendor is required to comply with this policy, a compliance plan will be established between the Department and the vendor to be supplied by piped hot and cold water under pressure and be connected to a sanitary sewer. In no instance will the compliance plan exceed six months.

Approved by the Flathead City-County Board of Health on September 14, 2006.


Nancy F. Askew, Chair

Attachments: Policy Number 94-1
ARM 37.110.256 – Mobile Food Service